

WORKING TOGETHER

THE NEXT IFLA CONFERENCE IS ON 13–19 AUGUST 2016 IN COLUMBUS, OHIO, USA
THREE ALIA MEMBERS SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES OF BEING INVOLVED IFLA.

LIBRARY POWER

The chair of IFLA's Public Libraries Section and City Librarian at Gold Coast City Library, **MARIAN MORGAN-BINDON**, is inspired by colleagues from around the world.

IFLA's Public Libraries Section (PLS) provides an active international forum and network for the development and promotion of public libraries. We are committed to ensuring free and equitable access to information and public library services for people worldwide. Members of the Standing Committee bring with them a wealth of experience, knowledge and skills, and our combined networks reach across the globe.

Leading the Standing Committee and participating in IFLA's annual World Library and Information Congress (WLIC) and other meetings has given me the opportunity to visit some amazing libraries and experience different conditions firsthand. It has also allowed me to experience the difference that public libraries make to people's lives and reinforce my belief in the importance of a united voice for public libraries at all levels – local, national and international.

In 2015, PLS partnered with the City of Cape Town Library and Information Service and the Western Cape Provincial Library Service to present 'Public Libraries at the Crossroads', a professional development event in the lead-up to the WLIC. Participants from around the world joined with colleagues from southern Africa in an exciting but very practical program. The mixed groups worked together to demonstrate that, despite geographical, societal and linguistic differences, our mission is the same. We were able to include the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation workshop, 'Design Thinking Toolkit for Libraries', in the program.

The PLS had also conducted a survey, 'How do you describe a public library?', in which library professionals and their communities were asked what words or concepts immediately came to mind when thinking about a public library. Led by Jan Richards from Orange, the PLS Secretary and Information Co-ordinator, this project attracted respondents from 21 countries across 6 continents. Words such as 'community', 'free' and 'inclusive' were universally used to describe public libraries, reinforcing our contribution to social capital and the creative economy.



Marian Morgan-Bindon

More recently, PLS has been collecting stories about the ways in which public libraries across Europe have been responding to the refugee crisis. The resulting document is a starting point for shared experience and inspiration and demonstrates the power of libraries to have a positive influence on people's lives. For those of you attending WLIC 2016 in Columbus, be sure to make a note that the PLS's program will explore this topic in greater depth.

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A DECADE OF IFLA EXPERIENCE

EVELYN WOODBERRY shares her experience of being a Copyright and other Legal Matters committee member.

I attended my first IFLA Congress in 2004 in Buenos Aires and found it to be a daunting experience. The size and structure of the congress made simple tasks, such as finding the right room, somewhat complicated, but colleagues who had attended previous congresses provided welcome assistance. I vividly recall becoming lost trying to find my way on foot to the conference centre, as I admired the wonderful Puente de la Mujer bridge and explored the city highlights, such as La Recoleta Cemetery and Plaza de Mayo.

Since that time I have grown to appreciate the diverse international perspectives the congress provides and continue to admire members who work across borders in multiple languages in their efforts to improve access to information worldwide.

In 2005, I became a member of the Copyright and other Legal Matters (CLM) committee, which provides a focus for my ongoing involvement. I have been responsible for managing congress sessions, working with speakers from around the world. I have participated as a speaker in sessions organised by the CLM and,

on occasion, those by other sections. This invaluable experience has made me realise that membership of a section or a committee is the most effective method to get the most out of the congress.

As my experience and understanding of IFLA developed, I increased my engagement with the congress – the benefits are far broader than simply attending a conference. The different cities in which it is held provide insights into various cultures and the opportunity to see firsthand how other countries respond to the development and design of libraries.

Following my retirement in 2014, I was nominated for the position of Chair of the CLM committee, a position I am honoured to undertake now that I have the time to contribute to the ongoing work of the committee. I look forward to the continuing involvement of CLM members in influencing developments at the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) that will benefit libraries everywhere. The adoption of the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled was a significant achievement for committee members who had worked on it for many years.

The 2016 Congress will be held in Columbus, Ohio. After attending so many congresses, I won't find it at all daunting. I look forward to catching up with colleagues and welcoming new participants.

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Kerry Smith (left) and Evelyn Woodberry at IFLA 2015



Kerry Smith

ALIA RETIREES AT IFLA 2015 CAPE TOWN

KERRY SMITH knows there is life after retirement in the library business.

It was wonderful to see a small group of ALIA Retirees in Cape Town, South Africa. 'Stay Connected' is the slogan adopted by the ALIA Retirees group, who continue to make contributions to the profession.

After a lifetime of active involvement with IFLA, Margaret Shaw now works two days per week as a volunteer librarian at the National Portrait Gallery in Canberra. She stayed clear of IFLA for some years, hoping that a younger person would represent Australia and New Zealand on the Standing Committee of the IFLA Art Libraries Section, but in Cape Town she relented and agreed to be a corresponding member until a suitable replacement appears.

Semi-retired Angela Bridgland is enjoying a better balance of life and professional engagements after working with IFLA to help build the curriculum for Building Strong Library Associations. She has also been involved with the Board's strategic planning process to create a sustainable future for IFLA and its members. The Cape Town congress enabled her to get up-to-date information on IFLA's worldwide program and be inspired by how our various communities creatively adapt to suit their cultures and available resources.

As Evelyn Woodberry tells us in this issue, the 2015 Congress was her first as a fully fledged retiree. This meant she could attend sessions purely out of interest, and she had more time to catch up with international colleagues and friends. Attending an IFLA conference just over the ocean from Western Australian was too tempting for her. She had been involved with IFLA for a number of years in the Library Theory and Research (LTR) and Education and Training Sections. In Cape Town, she attended an LTR business meeting and, as no one else came forward, she is now convenor of a special interest group on library history (ifla.org/library-history). On top of that she is working with colleagues to produce a session at IFLA 2016 on 'Libraries and Immigrants: Historical Perspectives'. 🌟

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